

Message Text

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42

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 EB-11 MC-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 SAM-01

ACDA-19 COME-00 DRC-01 /136 W
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FM AMEMBASSY OSLO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8144

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO

SECDEF

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 1740

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS BEXP NO NATO

SUBJECT: AIRCRAFT REPLACEMENT

REF: (A) NATO 2271 (B) OSLO 1598

SUMMARY: DEFENSE MINISTER FOSTERVOLL HAS REAFFIRMED TO
AMBASSADOR NORWEGIAN INTEREST IN JOINT PROCUREMENT OF
REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT BY THE NETHERLANDS, BELGIUM,
DENMARK AND NORWAY. NORWAY DOES NOT PLAN TO ABANDON
STRONGSUPPORT FOR THIS PROGRAM; NOR DOES NORWAY
CONTEMPLATE THE F-5E AS REPLACEMENT CANDIDATE IN THE
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1980'S. END SUMMARY

1. IN A MEETING THIS MORNING (APRIL 30) WITH NORWEGIAN DEFENSE MINISTER FOSTERVOLL ATTENDED ALSO BY CHIEF OF MATERIEL FOR DEFENSE MINISTRY GENOYAL HAMRE, THE AMBASSADOR RAISED THE QUESTION OF THE NORWEGIAN POSITION ON AIRCRAFT REPLACEMENT AT THE APRIL 23 EXPERTS MEETING IN BRUSSELS (REF A) AND, WITHOUT IDENTIFYING SOURCE, EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN OVER IMPLICATIONS OF REPORTED SHIFT IN NORWEGIAN SUPPORT FOR JOINT PROCUREMENT. AMBASSADOR RECEIVED REASSURING CONFIRMATION THAT THE NORWEGIANS ARE INDEED SERIOUS ABOUT JOINT PROCUREMENT OF REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT WITH BELGIUM, THE NETHERLANDS AND DENMARK. THE THRUST OF THE MEETING ON MAY 2 OF THE FOUR DEFENSE MINISTERS, ACCORDING TO FOSTERVOLL, WILL BE TO EXPLORE BOTH THE MILITARY AND BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS RELATING TO THE FEASIBILITY OF PROCUREMENT OF A SINGLE REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT BY ALL FOUR NATIONS.

2. THE NORWEGIAN VIEW IS THAT THE DECISION TO BUY A COMMON AIRFRAME/ENGINE WILL ENSURE STANDARDIZATION AMONG THE FOUR COUNTRIES FOR MAJOR LOGISTICS SUPPORT. WITHIN THE SINGLE AIRFRAME/ENGINE COMBINATION, IT IS HOPED THAT INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY MILITARY REQUIREMENTS CAN BE ACCOMMODATED THROUGH SELECTION OF COMPONENT AVIONICS PACKAGES. IN NORWEGIAN CONSIDERATION OF THIS PROBLEM, THEY HAVE CLASSIFIED THE POSSIBLE CANDIDATE AIRCRAFT INTO TWO GROUPS: ONE, A MORE SOPHISTICATED AIRPLANE REPRESENTED BY THE NORTHROP COBRA, THE SOPHISTICATED VIGGEN, AND THE SUPER F-1 MIRAGE, FOR EXAMPLE, AND THE SECOND GROUP, SOMEWHAT LESS ADVANCED, LESS EXPENSIVE AIRCRAFT SUCH AS EITHER OF THE U.S. LIGHTWEIGHT FIGHTERS (YF-16, YF-17), THE F-5E, THE MIRAGE 5, ETC. IN THE RECENTLY COMPLETED NORWEGIAN DEFENSE STUDY OF REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT, THE CHOICE BETWEEN EITHER THE MORE SOPHISTICATED OR THE LESS SOPHISTICATED AIRCRAFT REVOLVES AROUND THESE FACTORS: MILITARY REQUIREMENTS, COST, SUPPORTABILITY AND NUMBERS. AS THE F-5 E IS IN THE LESS SOPHISTICATED CATEGORY, IT HAS BEEN USED AS A GENERIC TERM FOR THAT TYPE OF AIRPLANE. HOWEVER, DEFENSE MINISTER FOSTERVOLL STATED EMPHATICALLY THAT NORWEGIAN POSITION IN BRUSSELS AND AT PRESENT HAS NOT CHANGED. THE NORWEGIANS

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DO NOT CONTEMPLATE BUYING THE F-5 E NOR DO THEY CONSIDER THE F-5E AS MEETING THEIR REQUIREMENTS OR THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE THREE OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE 1980'S.

3. THE NORWEGIANS HOPE THAT THE MAY 2 MEETING WILL (A) ENABLE THE FOUR COUNTRIES TO DECIDE UPON TWO OR THREE CANDIDATE AIRFRAMES AND (B) DELAY THE BELGIAN DECISION TO GO FORWARD WITH A FRENCH AIRPLANE. DELAY OF A BELGIAN

DECISION AT THIS TIME IS CRITICAL TO JOINT PROCUREMENT EFFORTS. THE NORWEGIAN DEFENSE MINISTER IS OF THE OPINION THAT WHILE BELGIUM IS NOW INCLINED TOWARD BUYING A FRENCH AIRPLANE, THE MAIN IMPETUS FOR THIS POSITION COMES FROM THE BELGIAN ECONOMIC MINISTER AND THE BELGIAN INDUSTRIAL SECTOR WHILE THE BELGIAN FOREIGN AND DEFENSE MINISTERS RECOGNIZE THE ADVANTAGES OF BUYING A U.S. CANDIDATE AND COULD BE RESPONSIVE TO ADDITIONAL USG DEMARCHES. BUCHANAN

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Message Attributes

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